DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 256 517 PS 015 141

AUTHOR Diana, Mark S.
TITLE The Relationship between Observations of Affiliative Behavior Patterns for Parents and Toddlers and Parental Reports of Caregiving, Play and Support-Control Behaviors.
PUB DATE Apr 85
NOTE 48p.; Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the Midwest Association for the Education of Young Children (Des Moines, IA, April 17-20, 1985).
PUB TYPE Reports - Research/Technical (143) -- Speeches/Conference Papers (150) -- Tests/Evaluation Instruments (160)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Child Rearing; Comparative Analysis; *Fathers; *Mothers; *Parent Child Relationship; *Play; *Toddlers
IDENTIFIERS *Affiliative Behavior

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to extend understanding of affiliative interaction between parents and toddlers and to correlate affiliative behaviors with frequency and type of mothers' and fathers' caregiving activities, play experiences, and support-control interactions. The research was conducted with 10 families who each had one toddler between 15 and 23 months of age. Data were gathered using in-home observations and parental self-report questionnaires. Findings indicated that minimal differences exist between the behavioral styles, type of interactions, and activity patterns used by mothers as compared with those used by fathers. Findings are consistent with those of other researchers who have studied affiliative behavior in laboratory and structured in-home observation sessions. The only difference between mothers' and fathers' affiliative interaction with toddlers was found in the category of grooming behaviors: mothers were observed taking part in more grooming behaviors than fathers. This difference is seen as a minor one since the total number of grooming behaviors displayed by each parent was low. For mothers, higher frequencies of physical support behaviors were correlated with higher frequencies of affiliative interaction, whereas positive control interactions by fathers were highly correlated with frequency of affiliative interaction. Data also suggested that, especially among fathers, higher reported frequencies of support and positive control behaviors are correlated with higher frequencies of play activities. The appendices contain an observational chart and a parental questionnaire; these are followed by a six-page list of references. (Author/RH)

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The Relationship Between Observations of Affiliative Behavior Patterns for Parents and Toddlers and Parental Reports of Caregiving, Play and Support-Control Behaviors

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Mark S. Diana, Ph.D.
Assistant Professor
Department of Home Economics
Family Life and Consumer Education
Central Michigan University

ABSTRACT

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN OBSERVATIONS OF
AFFILIATIVE BEHAVIOR PATTERNS FOR PARENTS AND TODDLERS AND
PARENTAL REPORTS OF CAREGIVING, PLAY AND SUPPORT-CONTROL BEHAVIORS

by

Mark Steven Diana

The purpose of this study was to extend understanding of affiliative interaction between parents and toddlers and to correlate affiliative behaviors with frequency and type of caregiving activities, play experiences and support-control interactions on the part of mothers with toddlers and fathers with toddlers.

The research was conducted with ten families who had one toddler between fifteen and twenty-three months of age. Each mother and father worked outside the home twenty or more hours per week in occupations such as minor professionals, small businessmen, clerks, technicians, salesman, skilled craftsman and factory workers or were students. Parents had twelve to seventeen years of schooling and ranged in age from twenty-two to thirty-three years.

Data were gathered using in-home observations and parental self-report questionnaires. Three two-hour observations of parent-toddler interactions were scheduled in family homes to assess type and frequency of parent-toddler affiliative interaction. Questionnaires were used with mothers and fathers to assess type and frequency of parental caregiving activities, play experiences and support-control interactions with their toddlers.

No statistically significant differences were found between mother-toddler and father-toddler affiliative interaction. More similarities than differences were found between mothers and fathers in caregiving activities, play experiences and support-control interactions with toddlers. Frequency of

general care, feeding and rest behaviors were similar for parents while mothers reported doing more cleaning of the toddler than fathers. Parents exhibited similar levels of intellectual, arousal, and exploratory play while statistically significant differences were found between parental reports of verbal and physical support or positive and negative control behaviors with their toddlers.

While no relationships were found between parental caregiving behaviors and parent-toddler affiliative behaviors, relationships were found between affiliative behavior and parental play experiences, and affiliative behavior and support and positive control interactions on the part of parents with toddlers. Increased parental arousal and exploratory play activities were associated with more affiliative behaviors between parents and toddlers. For mothers, higher frequencies of physical support behaviors were correlated with higher frequencies of affiliative interaction toward their toddlers. Positive control interactions by fathers with toddlers were highly correlated with frequency of affiliative interaction between father and toddler. Analysis of the data also suggest that, especially among fathers, higher reported frequencies of support and positive control behaviors are correlated with higher frequencies of play activities with toddlers.

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

Research and literature related to young children have focused on the first three years of life as a critical time period in a child's total development. Growing emphasis has been placed on intervention and education programs for children and families, recognizing that work with parents is the most effective way to meet the developmental needs of the young child. Researchers, practitioners and educators are focusing on the developmental impact of the family on young children and on the importance of the home as a center of learning for all family members (Bobbitt and Paolucci 1975). Realizing the importance of the family in a child's learning and development, this research selected variables in parent-child interaction which occur in the home and examined the relationship between these characteristic activities and interactions on the part of parents and toddlers. This study focused on affiliation and on factors influencing parent-toddler interaction, as significant variables in social-emotional development for the child.

Affiliation, as a toddler behavior, just like wariness, curiosity, and attachment, is frequently studied as a component of emotional development for infants and toddlers (Sroufe 1979). Suggested by the research on affiliation, attachment, wariness, and curiosity is the importance of these behaviors in personality formation for the child.

Affiliation and attachment behaviors have been viewed as major factors in social growth and development for young children (Lamb 1977a, Vandell 1979, Lamb 1977b, Stewart and Burgess 1978, and Fox 1977). As parents and toddlers interact, affiliative behaviors on the part of mothers and fathers are seen as significant factors in personality formation for the child. Parental behavior also serves as a model for the child's own behaviors. Frequently, too, parents initiate

affiliative and attachment interaction so the child receives a great deal of unsolicited affiliative behavior from parents (Stewart and Burgess 1978). By measuring affiliative behaviors of mother, father and toddler, emphasis is placed on the reciprocal nature of the parent-child relationship in this research study (Field 1978, Belsky 1979, and Lamb 1977c).

Multiple variables related to reciprocal relationships between parent and toddler are included in this research study to consider aspects of an ecosystem's perspective when examining parent-toddler relationships. A group of families sharing some common environmental experiences were studied with respect to type and frequency of interaction occurring between parent and toddler. Lamb, reflecting a perspective held by other researchers studying the young child, has stated that "... the process of personality development depends on our willingness to acknowledge the multi-dimensionallity and complexity of the child's social environment..." (Lamb 1977a). Development for toddlers is influenced by many factors occurring with the family unit and in the larger ecosystem with which the family interacts. An ecosystem theoretical perspective to the study of family recognizes that interactions among family members, and interactions between the family and its environment, influence the developmental experiences parents provide their children and impact on how parents interact with their toddlers (Kantor and Lehr 1975, Bubolz, Eicher and Sontag 1979, Bubolz and Paolucci 1976).

Researchers suggest that differences in affiliative behavior between toddlers, as well as differences in affiliative behavior between toddlers and their parents, may be related to the type of activities parents do with their child, to gender of parent and child, and to characteristics of those mothers and fathers participating in the study (Lamb 1977b, Clarke-Stewart 1978, Belsky 1979, Stewart and Burgess 1978, Waters, Whippman, Sroufe, 1979, Clarke-Stewart, Umeh, Snow, and Pederson 1980). Consideration of similar factors will be done in this

research study. Through a series of three in-home observations, assessment will be made of toddler affiliative behaviors toward mother and father. During these observations, assessment of affiliative behaviors by mother and father toward their toddler were also done. A questionnaire was then administered to mothers and fathers to determine how frequently parents believe they take part in specific activities with their toddlers. Parents were asked to provide information related to their education and occupation levels. From the observational and questionnaire data gathered in this study, frequency analysis, t-tests for matched pairs, and correlations were used to understand characteristics of the parent-toddler relationship as reflected by affiliative behaviors of parent and toddler and activity and interaction patterns between toddlers and parents. Suggested by this research is an analysis of data emphasizing how often parents engage their toddler in particular activities including the type and frequency of affiliative behavior observed for toddlers and parents during the in-home observations.

Measurement of affiliative behaviors took place during a series of three in-home observations. The measures of affiliative behaviors in this research were based on typical verbal and physical behaviors used by other researchers to assess affiliation (Lamb 1977a, Lamb 1977b, Lamb 1977c, Stewart and Burgess 1978, Clarke-Stewart 1977). By coding the type and frequency of affiliative behavior between toddler and parent, the research emphasis was on the reciprocal nature of parent-toddler interaction (Stewart and Burgess 1978). Attachment, which is often measured along with affiliation, was not assessed in this study since measurement of attachment, as a dimension of social-emotional development, is usually based on situations which are anxiety producing and involve separation of the child from his or her parent (Clarke-Stewart 1978, Clarke-Stewart 1977, Fox 1977, Cohen and Campos 1974). In this study, observations focused on typical in-home situations

for toddlers and parents that are not anxiety producing, and instead, through measurement of affiliation alone, reflect the greater independence and detachment characteristic of the child's second year (Lamb 1977d).

Research has suggested that affiliative difference between toddlers, as well as differences in affiliative behavior on the part of toddlers toward each of their parents, relate to adult activity and interaction with the young child (Lamb 1977d, Clarke-Stewart 1978, Burgess 1978, and Belsky 1979). The findings suggest that the nature of parent-toddler interaction could be further explored using self-report questionnaires to determine how frequently parents take part in specific activities with their toddler. Information gathered from questionnaires on activity and interaction patterns could then be correlated with affiliative behaviors recorded for parents and toddlers during the in-home observation sessions. Basic information related to occupation, education, and parental work time away from home was assessed with the questionnaire. The questionnaire was also structured to obtain data on the type and frequency of caregiving activities parents participate in with their child. Parents were asked in the questionnaire to report the type and frequency of play experiences they do with their child. Information on type and frequency of support control techniques used by parents when interacting with their toddlers was the third set of questions asked in the questionnaire. Questionnaire data was used along with data from the observations, to determine if a positive or negative relationship exists between the parent-child interaction assessed on the self-report instrument, and affiliative behaviors recorded for toddlers and parents during the in-home observations.

Assessment of this range of variables using the self-report instrument may indicate groups of interaction patterns in families. Correlation of the questionnaire data with information on type and frequency of parent-toddler affiliative behavior suggest that patterns of reciprocal interaction exist between

parent and toddler which contribute to social-emotional growth and expression for the toddler. Based on data recorded during the observation sessions, and on data gathered using the self-report instrument with parents, the study focused on the following research questions in an effort to better understand the parent-toddler relationship.

Research Questions

1. Determine whether there is a difference in how frequently each type of affiliative behavior is recorded for mothers toward their toddlers and fathers toward their toddlers during the in-home observation sessions.

2. Determine whether there is a difference between toddlers and their mothers and toddlers and their fathers in how frequently affiliative behaviors on the part of toddlers toward their parents are recorded during the in-home observation sessions.

3. Determine whether there is a difference in how frequently mothers and fathers report taking part in particular caregiving activities, i.e. feeding, hygiene, rest, and general care of their toddlers.

4. Determine whether the frequency of mother and father caregiving activities with their toddlers, i.e. feeding, hygiene, rest and general care has any relationship to the frequency of affiliative behaviors between parent and toddler recorded during the in-home observation sessions.

5. Determine whether there is a difference between how frequently mothers and fathers report taking part in particular play activities, i.e. play experiences which are intellectual, social, arousal, and exploratory with their toddlers.

6. Determine whether the frequency of mother and father play activities, i.e. play intellectual, social, arousal, and exploratory play with toddlers is related to how frequently affiliative behaviors are recorded by parents toward toddlers and toddlers toward parents during the in-home observation sessions.

7. Determine whether mothers and fathers differ in the frequency with which each parent reports using positive verbal and positive physical support interactions with their toddlers.

8. Determine whether there is a relationship between how frequently mothers and fathers report using positive verbal or positive physical support interactions with their toddlers and how frequently specific affiliative behaviors are recorded between parents and toddlers during the in-home observation sessions.

9. Determine whether there is a difference between how frequently mothers and fathers report using positive or negative control behaviors when interacting with their toddlers.

10. Determine whether there is a relationship between the reported use by parents of positive or negative control behaviors with toddlers and how frequently affiliative behaviors between parents and toddlers are recorded during the in-home observation sessions.

11. Determine whether there is a relationship between the frequency of support behaviors reported by mothers and fathers with their toddlers and the frequency of caregiving activities parents report participating in with their toddlers.

12. Determine whether there is a relationship between the frequency of control behaviors reported by mothers and fathers with their toddlers and the frequency of caregiving activities parents report participating in with their toddlers.

13. Determine whether there is a relationship between the frequency of support behaviors reported by mothers and fathers with their toddlers and the frequency with which mothers and fathers report taking part in play activities with their toddlers.

14. Determine whether there is a relationship between the frequency of control behaviors reported by mothers and fathers with their toddlers and the frequency of play activities mothers and fathers report taking part in with their toddlers.

A visual presentation of the relationship between those variables assessed using the research questions is presented in Figure 1.

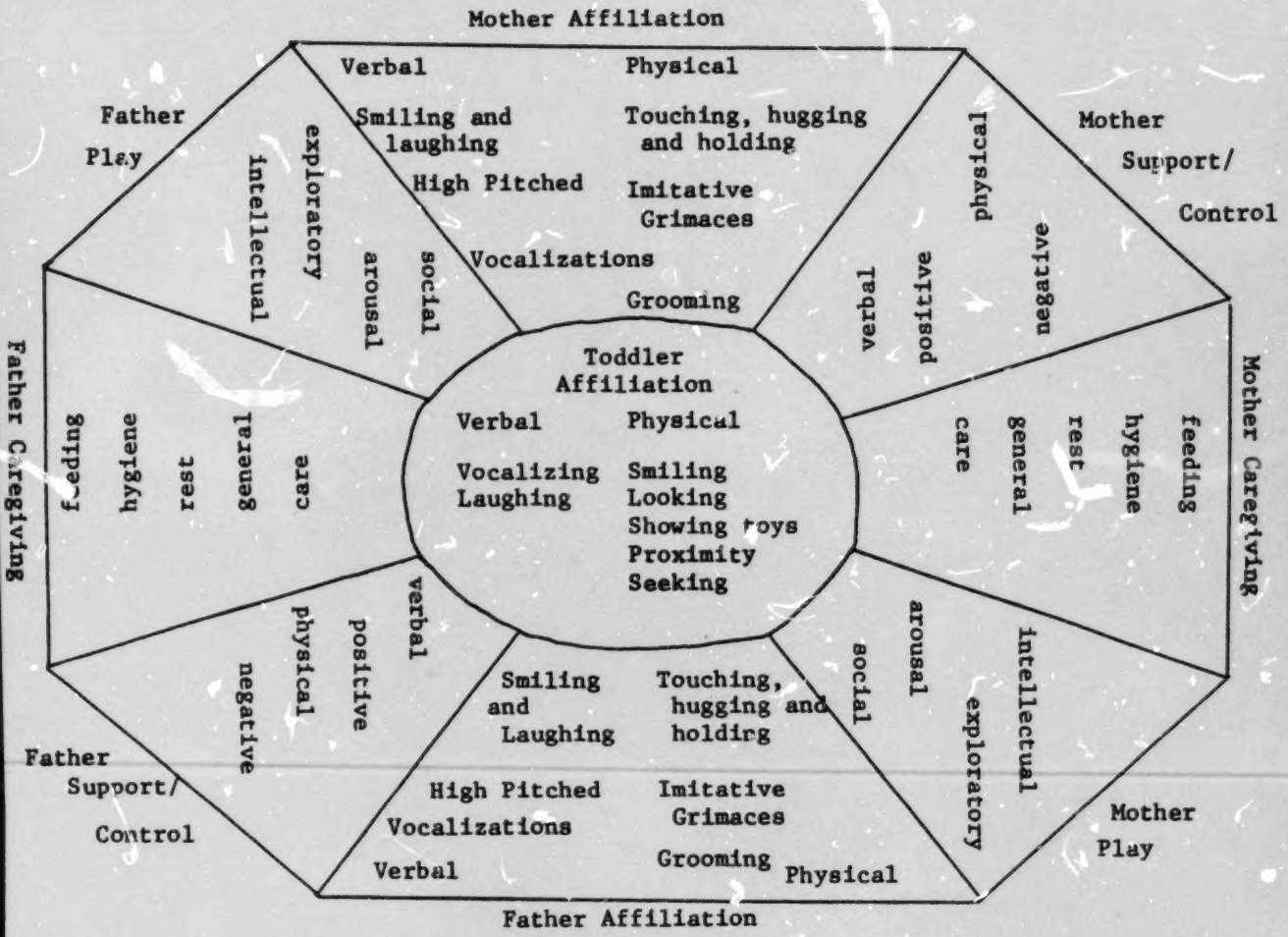


Figure 1
Categories of Affiliation and Interaction Variables
Assessed Using Research Question One through
Fifteen

METHODOLOGY

This research was conducted to extend understanding of interaction taking place between parent and toddler. In-home observations of affiliative behavior between parent and toddler were conducted to determine whether a relationship exists between parent-toddler affiliative behavior and the frequency and type of parental caregiving activities, of parent-toddler play experiences, and of parental support-control interactions.

Consideration of methodology will be divided into five sections: selection of families, description of selected families, development of assessment instruments: observational chart and questionnaire, procedures for data collection, and procedures for data analysis.

Selection of Families

The original criteria established to select families for this study were: 1) each family would have a traditional father-mother-child configuration; 2) families would have only one child, a toddler between twelve and eighteen months of age living at home; 3) each family would be Caucasian; 4) families would have a church affiliation with referrals made by their ministers; 5) each family would fall within a specific social strata range as defined by Hollingshead using his Four Factor Index of Social Strata; 6) both mother and father would be employed or attend school outside the home twenty or more hours per week; 7) and each family would live within a ten mile radius of an urban industrial area. These selection criteria were established for several reasons, with the rationales for making each selection listed in Figure 3.

During the initial telephone contact with the family, parents were informed that the research would include four in-home visits scheduled during a time when both father and mother would be home with their toddler. Second, parents were

advised that the first visit would include time for parents to become acquainted with the researcher, time to ask additional questions about the study, and, that during the first visit, both parents would be asked to sign a consent form for their participation and the toddler's participation in the study. Third, each family was informed that data collection would take place during the second, third and fourth visits and that each visit would be two hours in length and would involve observation of parent-toddler activity and interactions. Also they were informed that these visits would be scheduled during the morning, afternoon and evening. Parents and toddlers were encouraged to take part in activities parents feel are typical for them during the time each observation visit was scheduled. Fourth, parents were informed that during the final observation visit mother and father would each be asked to complete an individual self-report questionnaire regarding activities and interactions with their toddlers. Parents were assured that these questions had no right or wrong answers, and that neither the parents nor their toddlers would be evaluated through the observation or questionnaire process.

Description of Selected Families

The group of families selected for study included ten Caucasian families residing within an urban industrial area. Each family participating in the study had one toddler between fifteen and twenty-three months of age. Six of these toddlers were girls, while four of the children were boys. These families were relatively young with parents ranging between twenty-two and thirty-three years of age. Each mother and father participating in the study worked outside the home twenty or more hours per week so that each family made arrangements for alternative child care during the time periods when mother and father were away from home. Based on Hollingshead's Four Factor Index of Social Status, which uses

Criteria	Rationale
Each family would include a father, mother, child configuration with that child being a toddler	1. To permit the study of mother-father differences. 2. To increase the homogeneity of the selected group of families. 3. To facilitate recording and collection of observation data.
Toddlers between 15 and 23 months of age.	1. To permit proper assessment of age appropriate affiliative behaviors for toddlers. 2. To increase similarity of behaviors and interaction patterns by limiting the toddler age range. 3. To maintain consistency between child age range and the type of activities and experiences reported on the parental self-report questionnaire.
Mothers and fathers are both employed or attend school outside the home for 20 or or more hours per week.	1. To increase homogeneity of the selected group of families. 2. To reflect current trends among young urban families. 3. To increase similarity between mother and father regarding the amount of time parents and toddlers have available to interact with each other.
Each family would be Caucasian, would have church affiliation, and share a similar social strata as defined by Hollingshead's Index of Social Status.	1. To increase the homogeneity of the selected group of families. 2. To increase the similarity of toddler life experiences.
Urban residence.	1. To increase the homogeneity of the selected group of families. 2. To facilitate data collection.

Figure 3

Selection Criteria for Families Participating in Study

the education and occupation level of mother and father to determine a composite family score, each family in the study could be classified within two social strata levels. These levels, two and three, Hollingshead has called the medium business, minor professional, technical, skilled craftsman, clerical and salesworker in identifying general occupation categories (Hollingshead 1975).

Descriptive information regarding families in this study is available in Figure 4. These data include the following information for each family: parent education, parent occupation, parent age, the number of hours each parent works outside the home, sex of child, and the age of each toddler. Education levels for participants fell within a five year range from twelve to seventeen years of schooling.

Occupations of fathers and mothers included factory workers, teacher, receptionist, photographer, clerks, students, counselors and salesmen. The number of hours parents worked outside the home included a range of twenty to fifty-eight hours per week with the majority falling between forty and forty-five hours per week. Parents taking part in the study range in age from twenty-two to thirty-three years while toddlers were between fifteen and twenty-three months of age.

Development of Assessment Instruments: Observation Chart and Questionnaire

This section will consider two aspects of the developmental process important in formation of the observational chart and parental self-report questionnaire used to gather data for this study. First, the rationales used to develop this observation chart and parental self-report questionnaire will be presented, together with technical factors significant in organizing each measurement tool.

Number of Family	Toddler: Age/Gender	Age/Education/Occupation/Hours Out of Home Mother:		Father:	
One:	Age 16 mo.	Age	31	Age	25
	Gender F	Educ.	14 yr.	Educ.	12 yr.
		Occup.	Bookkeeper	Occup.	Truck Driver
		Hrs.	40	Hrs.	50
Two:	Age 16 mo.	Age	24	Age	33
	Gender F	Educ.	16 yr.	Educ.	15 yr.
		Occup.	Caseworker	Occup.	Retail Servs.
		Hrs.	40	Hrs.	50
Three:	Age 23 mo.	Age	22	Age	27
	Gender F	Educ.	13 yr.	Educ.	14 yr.
		Occup.	Receptionist	Occup.	Photographer
		Hrs.	40	Hrs.	40
Four:	Age 20 mo.	Age	22	Age	23
	Gender F	Educ.	14 yr.	Educ.	14 yr.
		Occup.	Clerk	Occup.	Technician
		Hrs.	40	Hrs.	48
Five:	Age 19 mo.	Age	25	Age	32
	Gender M	Educ.	14 yr.	Educ.	16 yr.
		Occup.	Student	Occup.	Teacher
		Hrs.	20	Hrs.	55
Six:	Age 15 mo.	Age	26	Age	29
	Gender M	Educ.	16 yr.	Educ.	14 yr.
		Occup.	Nurse	Occup.	Sm. Business
		Hrs.	40	Hrs.	45
Seven:	Age 22 mo.	Age	22	Age	26
	Gender F	Educ.	12 yr.	Educ.	14 yr.
		Occup.	Student	Occup.	Painter/mgr.
		Hrs.	20	Hrs.	54
Eight	Age 19 mo.	Age	27	Age	30
	Gender M	Educ.	13 yr.	Educ.	12 yr.
		Occup.	Factory	Occup.	Factory
		Hrs.	50	Hrs.	58
Nine:	Age 15 mo.	Age	28	Age	29
	Gender M	Educ.	13 yr.	Educ.	12 yr.
		Occup.	Retail Clerk	Occup.	Counselor
		Hrs.	20	Hrs.	40
Ten:	Age 22 mo.	Age	31	Age	33
	Gender F	Educ.	16 yr.	Educ.	17 yr.
		Occup.	Program Coor.	Occup.	Salesman
		Hrs.	40	Hrs.	45

Figure 4

Descriptive Data for Family Units in the Study

The methods of data collection used in this study include two research techniques. Observations, together with parental self-report questionnaires, were used as combined assessment strategies. This approach provided more indepth understanding of parent-toddler interaction and behavior patterns through research observations while parent-toddler activity and interaction were assessed using self-perception reports by parents (Parke 1979).

Observational Chart

The observation chart includes space to code twenty-two different behaviors between mother and toddler and father and toddler. A copy of this observation chart is included in Appendix A. These observational codings were limited for three reasons. First, only affiliative behavior was included in the coding, since an in-home observation format does not involve measurement during separation nor measurement in stress situations where toddler attachment is generally assessed (Clarke-Stewart 1977, Lamb and Lamb 1976, Lamb 1976a). Second, toddler behavior, as well as parental behavior, selected for coding during the observations were behaviors other researchers used to assess parent-toddler affiliation (Vandell 1979, Lamb 1977b, Stewart and Burgess 1978, Clarke-Stewart 1977, Field 1978, Belsky 1979). Third, results of a pilot study demonstrated that twenty-two behaviors were the maximum number which could be coded accurately by one researcher during a two minute period of time.

Organization of the observational chart was done with separate sections for mother's behavior toward toddler, toddler's behavior toward mother, father's behavior toward toddler and toddler's behavior toward father. Behaviors for each parent and toddler were recorded numerically from one to as many interactions as took place during a two minute period of time.

Self-Report Questionnaire

A parental self-report questionnaire was used to obtain information on caregiving activities, play experiences, and support-control interactions parents use with their toddlers. A copy of the parental self-report questionnaire is included as part of Appendix A. This questionnaire was also used to gather data on parent education, parent occupation, parent age, the number of hours parents work outside the home, gender of child, and toddler age.

The research goal in development of the self-report questionnaire was to construct a concise, unobtrusive instrument to obtain information from parents which could be used in conjunction with data collected during the three observation visits. The questionnaire was written so it would be appropriate for use by mothers and fathers of toddlers. Prior research on parent-toddler affiliative behavior, as well as research on the parent-child relationship, suggests that caregiving, play, and support-control would be appropriate areas of assessment using the parental self-report questionnaire. Based on research literature, it also seemed of value to collect information on how often parents believe they do particular activities with their toddlers (Kotelchuck 1976, Weinraub and Frankel 1977, Clarke-Stewart 1977, Clarke-Stewart 1978, Belsky 1979, Zegiob 1975, Rollins and Thomas 1979).

Frequency assessments were made using a five point Lickert scale on each section of the questionnaire. Parents were asked to identify the approximate number of times per day or week they engage in activities with their toddlers. Assessment was done in the following areas of parental caregiving: feeding, hygiene, rest and general care. Play was assessed in the following areas: intellectual, social, arousal, exploratory, independent and cooperative. Research questions related to play were written to ask parents about daily experiences such as block building, reading books, doll play, and games or songs. The questions

were organized and written so parents would not be able to identify specific play experiences with the areas of play represented by the questions, since that might change the response. Parental self-report measures concerning support-control interactions were also evaluated. This was done using categories of support, positive control and negative control. Between two and four questions were used for assessment within each individual area making up the general categories of caregiving, play and support-control.

The self-report instrument was written so mothers and fathers could complete the questionnaire within twenty to thirty minutes. The kind of caregiving activities, play experiences, and support-control interactions assessed were based on those activities, experiences and interactions believed to have common meaning for families and assessed for toddlers and parents using a variety of other methods in previous research.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The general implications of the research findings will be discussed in this section of the paper followed by an analysis of research findings according to categories of research questions. Those questions concerning affiliative behaviors of parents and toddlers will be discussed first. The research questions comparing parental caregiving, play activities, and support-control interactions with toddlers will be considered. The third group of results will be those relating parent-toddler affiliative behaviors with caregiving, play and support-control interactions on the part of parents with their toddlers. Finally, the findings correlating categories of caregiving, play, support and control based on the parental self-report questionnaire are presented.

The research findings indicate that there are minimal differences between behavioral styles, type of interactions and activity patterns used by mothers with toddlers when compared with behavioral styles, type of interactions and activity patterns used by fathers with toddlers for the families in this study. These were families with both parents working away from home twenty or more hours per week and with one toddler between fifteen and twenty-three months of age. Parents attended school between twelve and seventeen years. Using Hollingshead's Four Factor Index of Social Status, which includes occupation and education levels, families could be identified as medium business, minor professional, technical, skilled craftsman, clerical and salesworkers (Hollingshead 1975). All families in the study were Caucasian. Results from the majority of research questions support a no difference conclusion regarding mother-toddler and father-toddler interaction. Results include the following:

1. No differences were found between mothers and fathers in how frequently they exhibit affiliative behaviors in individual categories of smiling and laughing; touching, hugging and holding; imitative grimaces; or high pitched vocalizations in their toddlers.

2. No differences were found between mothers and fathers in the frequency of their verbal affiliative behaviors, physical affiliative behaviors, or total affiliative behaviors with their toddlers.

3. No differences were found between the frequency of toddler affiliation toward mother and father in behavior categories of smiling, looking, laughing, showing toys, and proximity seeking.

4. No differences were found between the frequency of toddler affiliation toward mother and father in behavior categories of verbal affiliation, physical affiliation and total affiliation.

5. No differences were found between the verbal affiliative behaviors, physical affiliative behaviors or total affiliative behaviors on the part of sons or daughters with their mothers and fathers.

6. No differences were found between mothers and fathers in the frequency of their total caregiving behaviors with toddlers or in how often they exhibit individual caregiving behaviors of feeding, rest, hygiene and general care with their toddlers.

7. No differences were found between mothers and fathers in the frequency of their intellectual play, arousal play or exploratory play interactions with their toddlers.

9. No differences were found between mothers and fathers in the frequency of their verbal and physical support interactions with their toddlers.

Parent-Toddler Affiliative Behaviors

The no difference findings between mothers and fathers in their affiliative behaviors with parents are consistent with findings by other researchers who have studied affiliative behavior in laboratory and structured in-home observation sessions (Belsky 1979, Lamb 1979, Field 1978, Clarke-Stewart 1977, Lamb 1977c, Lamb 1977d).

The only difference between mothers and fathers affiliative interaction with toddlers was found in the category of grooming behaviors. Mothers were observed taking part in more grooming behaviors than fathers were. This difference may

reflect the greater tendency for mothers to engage in caregiving interactions when compared with fathers. However, this difference is minor since the total number of grooming behaviors displayed by each parent was low.

While no statistically significant differences were found between affiliative interaction on the part of toddlers with mothers and affiliative interaction on the part of toddlers with fathers, it was interesting to note that the frequency of toddler vocalization with parents did approach a statistically significant level and that toddlers vocalized more toward their mothers than their fathers. The interaction category for mothers and fathers included a large number of behaviors and may best reflect the tendency for mothers to engage in more verbal interaction with their toddlers than fathers do (Clarke-Stewart 1977, Weinraub and Frankel 1977, Zegiob, Arnold and Forehand 1975).

It seems important to emphasize that there were no differences between mothers and fathers in the category of physical affiliative interaction, particularly since fathers usually engage in more physical interaction with their toddlers than mothers do (Clarke-Stewart 1977, Belsky 1979, Field 1978, and Parke 1979). However, during the observation sessions, the researcher found mothers using as much physical contact and arousal play as fathers to promote interaction with their toddler before mothers moved toward a more social, didactic style of interaction. This use of physical interaction may relate more to a need by working parents to establish a close relationship with their toddler than it does to gender of parent. It was also interesting to note, that during the observations, this researcher found toddlers frequently sought their fathers for comfort and that fathers took part in a large number of holding, soothing and pacifying behaviors with their toddlers.

Comparisons of Parental Caregiving, Play and Support-Control Interactions with their Toddlers

Caregiving activities have been seen as the mother's domain, with most mothers involved in more caregiving behaviors than fathers (Kotelchuck 1976). However, the self-report measures used in this study demonstrate greater involvement on the part of fathers in caregiving activities of all types. This higher level of parental involvement is probably due to both parents working outside the home and may relate to changing roles for parents in these families. Caregiving behaviors involving general care, feeding and rest showed no significant difference between mothers and fathers. However, the behavior category of cleaning or hygiene did show a significant difference between parents, with mothers reporting more involvement in cleaning activities with their toddlers than fathers did. When all caregiving activities assessed on the questionnaire were totaled, i.e. feeding, cleaning, rest and general care, the results were not statistically significant but did approach a statistically significant level with frequency totals of 45.10 for mothers and 39.40 for fathers. The results suggest that, although fathers in these families took an active role in their toddlers' care, mothers had more responsibility for caregiving tasks with their toddlers.

In the category of play, parental response to the self-report questionnaire showed more similarities than differences between how often mothers and fathers report taking part in play activities with their toddlers. No statistical differences were found between mothers and fathers in the frequency of their reported intellectual play, arousal play, or exploratory play with toddlers. However, a statistically significant difference was found between how often mothers and fathers take part in social play activities with their toddlers. The mean frequency for mothers was reported at 78.90 while the mean frequency for

fathers was reported at 7.90. These findings on parental differences in social play activities with toddlers are consistent with other research findings indicating that mothers take part in more social and intellectual play with their toddlers than fathers do (Clarke-Stewart 1977, Zegiob, Arnold and Forehand 1975).

While the research data show a statistically significant difference between total play activities on the part of mothers with toddlers and total play activities on the part of fathers with toddlers, the statistical results lack meaning when a careful analysis is done. Since the mean difference between mothers' total play activities with toddlers and fathers' total play activities with toddlers is the same as the mean difference between parents in the category of social play, and since categories of intellectual, arousal and exploratory play show minimal frequency differences between parents, findings regarding parental total play activities with toddlers have been affected by results from the social play category. In spite of the statistical findings, the most appropriate conclusion when analyzing the data is that there is little difference between mothers and fathers in how often they take part in total play activities with their toddlers.

The research study found no significant differences between mothers and fathers in their reported use of verbal and physical support behaviors with toddlers or in their reported use of positive or negative control behaviors with toddlers. Although mothers did exhibit a higher level of physical support behaviors toward their toddlers, the difference between mothers and fathers was not statistically significant. These results suggest that mothers and fathers in the study shared values and had a similar approach to childrearing within family units and among all families in the study. Probably the homogeneous nature of these families, both in terms of education and occupation level was a significant factor influencing parental use of support and control interactions when guiding the behavior of their toddlers.

The Relationship Between Parent-Toddler Affiliative Behavior and Parental Caregiving, Play and Support-Control Interactions with Toddlers

Four research questions look at relationships between data gathered using the parental self-report questionnaire and data collected during the in-home observation sessions concerning parent-toddler affiliative behavior. Pearson Product Moment Correlations were used to determine 1) whether the relationship between variables was positive or negative, i.e. did variables increase at the same rate or did one variable increase while the other decreased and 2) was the relationship significant at a .05 level of statistical significance. For purpose of this discussion, attention will focus on those results which approach a level of statistical significance between .05 and .10.

The data relating frequencies of parental caregiving with frequencies of affiliative behavior between parents and toddlers show no significant relationship between these variables. As a result, it seems reasonable to conclude that there is no relationship between the frequency of mothers' or fathers' caregiving activities with their toddlers and frequency of affiliative behavior between parent and child.

However, relationships were found between frequency of parental self-reported play activities with toddlers and frequency of parent-toddler affiliative interaction. Statistically significant relationships were found between fathers' arousal play activities with their toddlers and fathers' affiliative behaviors with their toddlers. This correlation was positive indicating that as fathers report an increase in arousal play activities with their toddlers that the frequency of fathers' affiliative behavior with their toddlers also increases. This relationship was significant at a .049 alpha level.

Two other relationships between father's play activities with toddlers and fathers' affiliative behaviors with their toddlers also approached a statistically significant level. The frequency of fathers' self-reported exploratory play activities with their toddlers reached a .056 level of statistical significance. The correlation between these variables was a positive .5346, indicating a common direction of increase. The total of all play activities on the part of fathers with their toddlers also approached a statistically significant relationship when correlated with fathers' affiliative behaviors with their toddlers. This correlation was a positive .4752 and reached a .083 level of statistical significance.

The results suggest that increased paternal play with toddlers, particularly in the categories of arousal and exploratory play, are probably associated with higher frequencies of paternal affiliative behavior toward toddlers. These results are particularly interesting because fathers tend to engage in more arousal and exploratory play with their toddlers than mothers do (Clarke-Stewart 1977, Belsky 1979, and Field 1978) and since research indicates that in many families fathers are more involved in play activities with their toddlers than mothers (Parke 1979). While two relationships between maternal play activities with toddlers and toddler play activities with their mothers approached a statistically significant level, it does not appear that the data reported indicates any meaningful relationship between those variables. In fact, these negative correlations raise questions as to whether higher than average responses on some questionnaires may have affected the statistical results concerning social play and total play categories.

As might be expected, relationships were found between parental support interactions with toddlers and parental affiliative interactions with toddlers, though no relationships were found between parental support interactions with

toddlers and toddler affiliative interactions with parents. Physical support interactions of mother with toddler were statistically significant at a .042 alpha level when related to affiliative interactions with toddlers. The correlation between these two variables was a positive .5706.

While no relationship for fathers reached a .05 level of statistical significance, two relationships approached statistical significance. Physical support interactions on the part of fathers with toddlers showed a positive .4835 correlation with affiliative behavior on the part of fathers with toddlers. The relationship between these variables reached a .078 level of statistical significance. Total support interactions of fathers with toddlers showed a positive .4503 correlation with affiliative behavior on the part of fathers toward toddlers. This relationship reached a .096 level of statistical significance.

These combined results for mother and father suggest that relationships exist between frequency of parental self-reported support interactions with toddlers and observed affiliative behaviors on the part of mothers and fathers with their toddlers. This conclusion seems particularly applicable to physical support interactions on the part of parents with their toddlers. Mothers' and fathers' physical support behaviors were more closely associated with parental affiliative behaviors than were mother's and fathers verbal support behaviors.

Results which correlate positive and negative parental control behaviors with affiliative behavior between parent and toddler are mixed for the mother-toddler relationship so that no meaningful conclusion can be reached concerning those results. However, there were statistically significant results concerning positive control interactions on the part of fathers with toddlers. Fathers' positive control interactions showed a positive .7909 correlation with fathers' affiliative behavior toward toddlers. These results were statistically significant at a .003 level. At the same time, fathers' positive control

interactions showed a positive .7510 correlation with toddlers' affiliative behavior toward fathers. The relationship between these variables was significant at a .006 alpha level. In combination, these results suggest a strong association between increased frequency of fathers' positive control behaviors between fathers and their toddlers. These data results indicate that the interaction patterns can be viewed as a reciprocal integrated process.

The Relationship Between Parental Caregiving, Play Activities and Support-Control Interactions with Toddlers

The relationship between categories of interaction and activity assessed using the parental self-report questionnaire were analyzed with the Spearman Rho Correlation at a .05 alpha level. Some of these relationships were statistically significant but, in several situations, it seemed appropriate to conclude that there was no relationship between the categories of data.

Frequency of caregiving activities involving fathers' general care with their toddlers was positively correlated at .6564, with fathers' support behavior toward their toddlers. This relationship was found to be statistically significant at a .020 level. However, since no other relationships between fathers' caregiving activities and fathers support behaviors were statistically significant, it appears that the category of general care on the part of fathers with toddlers may reflect a tendency for higher paternal scores in this category. Of particular interest is the negative relationship between frequency of maternal caregiving activities and frequency of maternal support behaviors toward toddlers. The implication of these data, which are not statistically significant, and therefore may lack accuracy and generalizability, is that mothers who report a higher frequency of caregiving activities may show fewer support behaviors toward their toddlers.

No relationship was found between parental self-reports concerning control behavior with toddlers and parental self-reports regarding caregiving behaviors with toddlers. Based on these research findings, it appears that there is no relationship between support and control interactions on the part of parents with toddlers and caregiving activities on the part of parents with toddlers.

In contrast, the relationship between parental reports of support behaviors with toddlers and parental reports of play activities with toddlers result in several statistically significant relationships for fathers. Frequency of fathers' arousal play activities with toddlers were correlated at a positive .6980 level with fathers' support behaviors with toddlers. These results reached a .013 level of statistical significance. Frequency of fathers' social play activities with toddlers were correlated, at a positive .6400 level, with fathers' positive support behaviors with toddlers. These results were significant at a .024 level.

At the same time, the frequency of fathers' total play activities with toddlers, were correlated at a positive .5877 level with fathers' support behaviors with toddlers. These results were statistically significant at a .037 level. Based on the research findings it seems appropriate to conclude that fathers, who report taking part in more play activities with their toddlers also report exhibiting more support interactions toward their toddlers. It is of interest that similar results were not found for mothers. This may be a function of the more containing, structured play style typical of mothers with their toddlers (Clarke-Stewart 1977, Belsky 1979, and Field 1978).

Similar results were found for fathers and mothers when the frequency of parental self-reported positive control behaviors were considered in relationship to the frequency of parental self-reported play activities with toddlers. Frequency of fathers' exploratory play activities with toddlers was positively correlated, at a .7407 level, with the frequency of fathers' positive control

behavior with toddlers. This relationship was statistically significant at a .012 level. While not statistically significant, the relationship between fathers' positive control behaviors with toddlers approached statistical significance with a .078 alpha level and a positive correlation of .4846. The total of all fathers' play activities with toddlers was correlated at a positive .6327 level with fathers' positive control behaviors with toddlers. The relationship between these variables was also statistically significant reaching a .025 alpha level. The data suggesting significant relationships between frequency of fathers' support behaviors and positive control behaviors with the frequency of fathers' play activities toward toddlers are further supported by findings which indicate no relationship between reported negative control behaviors by parents with toddlers and reported play activities by parents with toddlers.

Overview

As the activity, interactions and behavior patterns discussed in the previous sections are considered, it is evident that social-emotional development for the toddler occurs as the result of many interactions and experiences. Clearly, those interactions and experiences are part of a reciprocal, integrated process, with the behaviors and activities of parents and toddlers mutually affecting one another (Field 1978, Belsky 1979, and Lamb 1977c). These experiences include aspects of the toddlers' social environment, while other experiences include aspects of the natural and man-made environments. It is through the toddlers' interaction with those environments that growth takes place for young children in each of the developmental areas.

CONCLUSIONS

Analysis of the observational data on parent-toddler affiliative interaction, together with data analysis of parental play, caregiving and support-control interactions, suggest several conclusions applicable to the families taking part in this study. Due to sample size and method of family selection, generalization of these findings beyond the group of families studied is not possible. These conclusions are listed here as contributions toward a more complete understanding of mother-toddler and father-toddler relationships.

Based on the research findings, the following conclusions have been reached:

1. There are more similarities than differences in the frequency with which mothers and toddlers and fathers and toddlers express different types of affiliative behavior with one another.

2. The frequency of self-reported father-toddler caregiving activities shows active involvement by fathers in caregiving at a level nearly as high as the frequency of self-reported mother-toddler caregiving activities.

3. The frequency of self-reported parental play activities with toddlers in the areas of intellectual, arousal and exploratory play were similar for mothers and fathers.

4. Mothers report taking part in significantly more social play activities with their toddlers than fathers do.

5. Mothers and fathers report using similar frequencies of verbal and physical support interactions with their toddlers.

6. Mothers and fathers report using similar frequencies of positive and negative control interactions with their toddlers.

7. There is no relationship between how often mothers or fathers report taking part in caregiving activities with their toddlers and how frequently parents and toddlers exhibit affiliative behaviors with each other.

8. Fathers who report more play activities with their toddlers, especially arousal and exploratory play, also exhibit more affiliative behaviors toward their toddlers.

9. Mothers and fathers who report higher frequencies of support behaviors toward their toddlers also exhibit higher frequencies of affiliative behaviors toward their toddlers.

10. Fathers who report higher frequencies of positive control behaviors toward their toddlers exhibit more affiliative behaviors toward their toddlers and receive more affiliative behaviors from their toddlers.

11. No consistent relationships can be established between the frequency of parental self-reported caregiving activities with toddlers and the frequency of parental self-reported support behaviors toward toddlers.

12. No relationship can be established between the frequency of parental self-reported caregiving activities with toddlers and the frequency of parental self-reported control behaviors toward toddlers.

13. Fathers who report frequent play activities with toddlers, especially arousal and social play, also report higher levels of support behaviors toward their toddlers.

14. No relationship was found between reports by mothers on frequency of play activities with toddlers and reports by mothers on frequency of their support behaviors toward toddlers.

15. Fathers who report frequent play activities with toddlers, especially exploratory and social play, also report higher levels of positive control behaviors toward toddlers.

16. No relationship was found between reports by mothers on frequency of play activities with toddlers and reports by mothers on frequency of positive control behaviors toward toddlers.

17. No relationship was found between reports by mothers or fathers on frequency of play activities with toddlers and reports by either parent on frequency of negative control behaviors toward toddlers.

In general, there were more similarities than differences found in the mother-toddler and father-toddler relationship among the ten families in this study. The dual-career nature of these families may have been one factor contributing to these similarities. However, when the education and occupation status of parents in these families are taken into account, it appears that this in-home data consistently represents laboratory findings related to mother-father interactions with infants and toddlers and that, within families of a middle range socio-economic status, perceptions of roles, interactions and activities appropriate for mothers and fathers may be changing.

APPENDIX A

OBSERVATIONAL CHART

PARENTAL SELF-REPORT QUESTIONNAIRE

Time _____ Room _____

Date _____

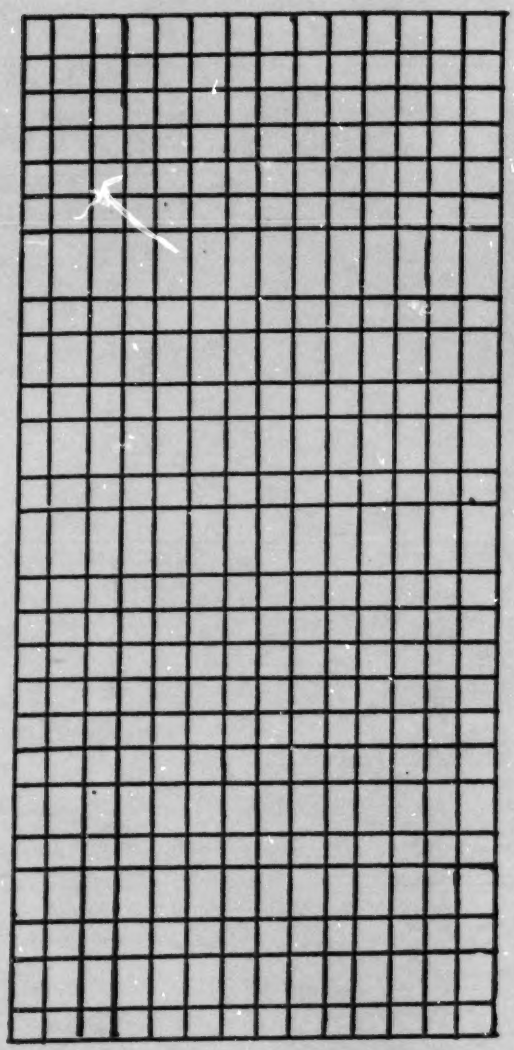
Coding for Affiliative Response

Toddler
-smiling
-vocalizing
-looking
-laughing
-showing toys
-proximity seeking

Mother
-smiling and laughing
-touching, hugging, holding
-imitative grimaces
-high pitched vocalizations
-grooming

Toddler
-smiling
-vocalizing
-looking
-laughing
-showing toys
-proximity seeking

Father
-smiling and laughing
-touching, hugging holding
-imitative grimaces
-high pitched vocalizations
-grooming



Coding will be done with numbers to include the sequence of behaviors.

Time 2:12 P.M.

Room Kitchen

Date 4/19/83

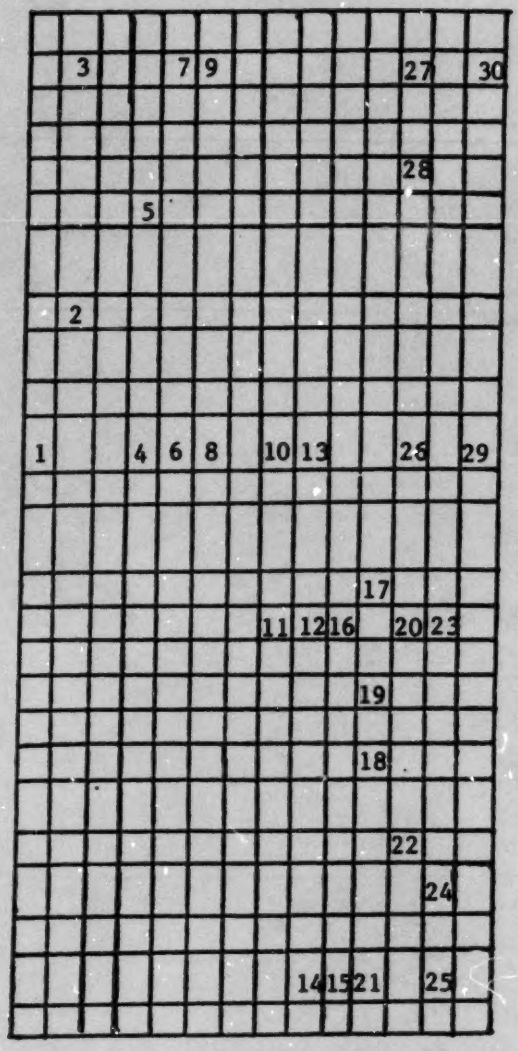
Coding for Affiliative Response

Toddler
-smiling
-vocalizing
-looking
-laughing
-showing toys
-proximity seeking

Mother
-smiling and laughing
-touching, hugging, holding
-imitative grimaces
-high pitched vocalizations
-grooming

Toddler
-smiling
-vocalizing
-looking
-laughing
-showing toys
-proximity seeking

Father
-smiling and laughing
-touching, hugging holding
-imitative grimaces
-high pitched vocalizations
-grooming



Coding will be done with numbers to include the sequence of behaviors.

Questionnaire to Assess Parent-Toddler Information, Caregiving Activities, Play Experiences, and Support and Control Techniques

The purpose of this questionnaire is to gather information about your toddler and the activities you do with that child. Your responses to these questions will be used in combination with the observations done as part of this research study. There are no right or wrong answers to these questions. Please keep in mind that answers will vary depending upon the interests and schedules you and your child have.

1. _____ (Child's first name) _____ (Child's sex) _____ (Child's birthdate)

2. _____ (Parent's sex) _____ (Parent's age at last birthday)

3. _____ (Parent's occupation) _____ (Year's of school completed)

_____ (Hours employed outside home/per week)

The next section of this questionnaire involves caregiving activities which need to be provided for children. The questions are asked in order to determine how frequently, on the average, you do each of the caregiving activities listed below. Please think of weekends as well as days of the week and check the response that best tells how often you take part in each activity.

FEEDING

breakfast

___each day of the week ___five-six times a week ___three-four times a week ___one-two times a week ___never

lunch

___each day of the week ___five-six times a week ___three-four times a week ___one-two times a week ___never

dinner

___each day of the week ___five-six times a week ___three-four times a week ___one-two times a week ___never

night-snacks

___each day of the week ___five-six times a week ___three-four times a week ___one-two times a week ___never

HYGIENE

diapering

___six or more times a day ___four-six times a day ___two-four times a day ___one-two times a day ___never

dressing

___six or more times a day ___four-six times a day ___two-four times a day ___one-two times a day ___never

cleaning: hands and face

___six or more times a day ___four-six times a day ___two-four times a day ___one-two times a day ___never

bathing

___six or more times a day ___four-six times a day ___two-four times a day ___one-two times a day ___never

REST

put down for a nap

___daily ___five-six times a week ___three-four times a week ___one-two times a week ___never

put to sleep at night

___daily ___five-six times a week ___three-four times a week ___one-two times a week ___never

put back to sleep during the night

___daily ___five-six times a week ___three-four times a week ___one-two times a week ___never

GENERAL CARE

comfort and soothe

___six or more times a day ___five-six times a day ___three-four times a day ___one-two times a day ___never

watch inside play

___six or more times a day ___five-six times a day ___three-four times a day ___one-two times a day ___never

watch outside play

___six or more times a day ___five-six times a day ___three-four times a day ___one-two times a day ___never

The questions below are about particular play activities you may do with your child. Please check the response which best describes how often you take part in each activity with your child, or encourage your child to play in this way. The questions apply to how often you do each activity with your child, not to how frequently your child takes part in this kind of play by him or herself.

playing with puzzles

___five-six times a day ___three-four times a day ___two-three times a day ___once a day ___never

building and stacking blocks

___five-six times a day ___three-four times a day ___two-three times a day ___once a day ___never

looking at books

___five-six times a day ___three-four times a day ___two-three times a day ___once a day ___never

dress-up or pretend

___five-six times a day ___three-four times a day ___two-three times a day ___once a day ___never

dolls or stuffed animals

___five-six times a day ___three-four times a day ___two-three times a day ___once a day ___never

games-songs, peek, pat-a-cake

___five-six times a day ___three-four times a day ___two-three times a day ___once a day ___never

tickle, tumble and roughhouse

___five-six times a day ___three-four times a day ___two-three times a day ___once a day ___never

riding or bouncing

___five-six times a day ___three-four times a day ___two-three times a day ___once a day ___never

mechanical toys (wind-up toys, jack-in-the-box, toys with motors)

___five-six times a day ___three-four times a day ___two-three times a day ___once a day ___never

play with toys to sort or order

___five-six times a day ___three-four times a day ___two-three times a day ___once a day ___never

play with stacking or connecting toys

___five-six times a day ___three-four times a day ___two-three times a day ___once a day ___never

encourage independent play (child playing by him or herself)

___five-six times a day ___three-four times a day ___two-three times a day ___once a day ___never

encourage play with other children (when you are with your child)

___five-six times a day ___three-four times a day ___two-three times a day ___once a day ___never

The following set of questions applies to ways in which you guide the behavior of your child. Please check the response which most closely applies to ways in which you influence the behavior and play style of your son or daughter. Again, keep in mind that there are no correct responses to these questions.

share play with child

___five-six times a day ___three-four times a day ___two-three times a day ___once a day ___never

approve or praise child's behavior or activities

___five-six times a day ___three-four times a day ___two-three times a day ___once a day ___never

use nicknames

___five-six times a day ___three-four times a day ___two-three times a day ___once a day ___never

show physical affection with hugs or kisses

___five-six times a day ___three-four times a day ___two-three times a day ___once a day ___never

give suggestions or instructions

___five-six times a day ___three-four times a day ___two-three times a day ___once a day ___never

give direction or commands

___five-six times a day ___three-four times a day ___two-three times a day ___once a day ___never

make or explain rules

___five-six times a day ___three-four times a day ___two-three times a day ___once a day ___never

threaten punishment or scold

___five-six times a day ___three-four times a day ___two-three times a day ___once a day ___never

spank or physically punish

___five-six times a day ___three-four times a day ___two-three times a day ___once a day ___never

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